

University of Western Ontario
School of Health Studies
HS4092F

Term: Fall 2010
Time: Wed. 8:30-11:30am
Location: UCC 66

Instructor: Dr. Elena Neiterman
Office: HSB 213
Office Hours: Wed. 11:45 am–12:45 pm
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Special Topics: Health, Illness and Society

Course Outline:

This course will introduce you to different social, political, cultural and economic dimensions of health and illness. We will examine the meaning of health and illness and how they vary culturally and historically. Using different theoretical approaches we will understand the organization of health care and the impact of economic and political contexts on the health of individuals. We will critically analyze the role of society in defining health and illness and organizing the delivery of health care. Finally, we will learn about social determinants of health approaching the study of health in the context of gender, age, class, race, and sexuality.

Course Organization:

1. Looking from historical and comparative perspectives, in the first part of the course we will explore how health and illness are defined across cultures. We will understand the link between personal and social experiences of health and illness. We will examine the concept of medicalization, talk about biomedicine, complementary and alternative medicine and other forms of healing.
2. In the second part of the course we will analyze the social determinants of health. Looking at Canada, we will explore how such factors as gender, age, race, class, sexuality, level of education, social support and other intersect with health and illness.
3. In the last part of the course we will explore how cultural, economic, and political ideologies form the delivery and organization of health care systems. We will identify different models of health care organization and delivery and reflect on current challenges faced by different health care systems.

Required Readings:

Markle, G. E., McCrea, F., B. (2008). *What if Medicine Disappeared?* New York: SUNY Press.

Raphael, D., Bryant, T. & Rioux, M. (Eds.). (2010). *Staying Alive: Critical Perspectives on Health, Illness, and Health Care*. 2nd edition. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press.

Raphael, D. (2009). *Social Determinants of Health: Canadian Perspectives*. 2nd edition. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press.

These books can be purchased at the university bookstore.

Course Evaluation:

Summary: Class participation (15%)
Critical Essay Proposal (15%)
Critical Essay (40%)
Final Exam (30%)

Class participation (15%)

You are expected to attend lectures and to actively participate in class discussions. Each week we will be discussing the assigned readings (see weekly schedule below). For each week, we will appoint a group of students to lead our discussion. The discussion leaders will prepare a short summary of the readings and a set of questions that we will discuss in class.

The participation mark will reflect your contribution to class as a discussion leader (the quality of your presentation and questions – 8%) and your responses and reflections on the questions posed by your peers (7%).

Critical Essay Proposal – 15% (Due Oct. 13) and Critical Essay - 40% (Due Dec. 08)

Briefly, these assignments require you to critically analyze one of the aspects of health care system in Canada. Choosing any topic related to health care system or health care delivery in Canada, you will be asked to redesign it in a way that would better fit the needs of our population. See more on the assignments below.

Final Exam (40%)

The final exam will be based on the material covered in lectures and the assigned readings. It will consist of multiple choice and open questions.

Policies:

Late Assignments:

A late submission of the assignments will be penalized 5% per day. All excuses for illness, injury and other special circumstances must be addressed following the procedures outlined at:

<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>.

Academic Offences:

It is responsibility of the students to familiarize themselves with the policies related to scholastic offences. Please refer to the following source:

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2010/pg113.html>

Plagiarism:

All assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

The computer-marked multiple-choice portion of the final exam may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Computer Use:

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture. No electronic devices will be allowed during examinations.

Support Services:

For information on Student Support Services or Student Development Services please refer to the following website: <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>.

Instructions for Writing Assignments:

For both papers:

- ✓ You are required to submit one hard copy of the assignment on the indicated due date. You may also be required to submit an electronic copy of your assignment. If this is the case, you will be notified in class.
- ✓ Late submissions will be penalized 5% per day.
- ✓ Use 2 or 1.5 line spacing and fonts Times New Roman 12 or Arial 10-11.
- ✓ The assignment should have a title page with your name and student number.
- ✓ If you have any questions, please direct them to your instructor **before** completing your assignment.

Goals of the assignment:

The goals of this assignment are to assess your understanding of the material learned in class and to evaluate your ability for critical analysis of the Canadian health care system. You should submit your assignment in two parts – a proposal (15%) and a critical essay (40%).

You will have to identify any aspect of our health care system that you would like to change or rebuild. You can choose any topic that fits your field of interest (i.e. delivery of care, relationship between health care professionals, community or hospitalized care, etc.)

Using the material learned in class and other academic literature, your essay will explain how and why you would change the aspect of health care system that you have chosen to transform. In making your argument, you would have to emphasize the process of changing it and state how it would improve the health of Canadian population.

Proposal – 15% (Due Oct. 13)

The proposal should be 1-3 pages long and should include a brief description of your project. You can write your proposal either as an essay or as an outline for your paper. Make sure to cover in your proposal the problem that you would be addressing in your essay, the steps that you would take in order to make your argument and the analytical structure of your essay.

If you have any questions about the assignment, please feel free to contact your instructor **prior** to submitting your proposal.

Critical Essay - 40% (Due Dec. 08)

Your assignment should be approximately 10-12 pages (2500 words) and should include the following components (not necessarily in the same order):

- ✓ Introduction – clearly identify the topic you are investigating and briefly summarize the structure of your essay.
- ✓ Literature review – using the material learned in class and other academic resources identify the major problems in the field you are investigating and explain how your work fits within the literature.
- ✓ Analysis – Describe why and how the identified problem should be addressed. Make sure to reflect on the steps that you would take to change the situation. If relevant, address the following questions:
 - Who would benefit from your innovation and why?
 - What barriers you anticipate to meet on the way to changing the system?
 - Who will be reluctant to accept the change you are suggesting and why?
 - How your proposal would benefit the health of Canadians?
 - What are the disadvantages of your innovation?
- ✓ Summary and Conclusion – summarize your essay reflecting on the implications of your proposal for overall health care system. Link your findings back to the literature review and explain how it would contribute to creating a better, fairer health care system in Canada.
- ✓ References – as long as you are consistent, you can use any acceptable style.

Weekly schedule:

Please keep in mind that this is a tentative schedule. Any changes made to the schedule will be announced in class and posted on WebCT.

Week	Topic	Readings
Week 1 (Sep. 15)	Course outline and introduction	No readings required
Week 2 (Sep. 22)	Perspectives on Health and Illness	Staying Alive: Chapters 1, 2
Week 3 (Sep. 29)	Perspectives of Health and Illness continued...	Staying Alive: Chapters 3, 4, 5
Week 4 (Oct. 6)	Challenging Biomedicine	What if Medicine Disappeared: Chapters 1, 2, 3
Week 5 (Oct. 13)	Challenging Biomedicine continued...	What if Medicine Disappeared: Chapters 4, 5, 6
Week 6 (Oct. 20)	Challenging Biomedicine continued...	What if Medicine Disappeared: Chapters 7, 8
Week 7 (Oct. 27)	Social Determinants of Health	Social Determinants of Health: Chapters 1, 2, 3
Week 8 (Nov. 03)	Social Determinants of Health continued...	Social Determinants of Health: Chapters 9, 11, 14, 16
Week 9 (Nov. 10)	Social Inequality and Public Policy	Social Determinants of Health:

		Chapters 18, 20, 24
Week 10 (Nov. 17)	Canada's Health Care System	Staying Alive: Chapter 10, 11, 12
Week 11 (Nov. 24)	Critical Issues in Health and Illness	Staying Alive: Chapters 13, 14
Week 12 (Dec. 1)	Critical Issues in Health Care continued...	Staying Alive: Chapters 15, 16, 17
Week 13 (Dec. 8)	Exam Review	No readings required